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Good Morning, Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and other distinguished members of the Public Health Committee.

My name is Felecia Gerardi and I live in Ellington CT. I am here strongly supporting Senate Bill 248, requiring hospital specific information on adverse event reporting. I had a really bad experience in a hospital – my story is attached. What is important for you to know is that instead of one day in a hospital, I was there for over thirty - due to medical error. I am going to be filing a complaint with the Department of Public Health against my doctor who did the surgery during which she severed my ureter and put two holes into my intestine. I wonder if what happened to me was ever even reported to the Department of Public Health. I nearly died.

The public has a right to know and by passing this bill, the public could access the information on the DPH web site. They could see if there was a pattern of errors – whether one hospital had more infections, or medication errors, falls or wrong site surgeries. I believe that the very visibility of the report will create urgency in the hospitals to increase measures and oversight, thereby creating greater safety and better outcomes.

Hospitals complain about the punitive nature of the fines – up to \$10,000. What about the punishment victims of error and negligence experience? I face lifelong pain due to an eight by ten inch mesh that now holds my organs in place. And think of the cost –over \$250,000 on what was supposed to be one day surgery.

Please pass this bill. Thank you

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No one would listen!!

On March 10 2006 following a routine laparoscopic Hysterectomy, I knew there was a problem. A very disgusting odor discharge was coming out my body. No tests were ordered and I was catheterized three days after the initial surgery. Dr McDonnell who performed my surgery knew that I was still in the hospital but didn't come to see me till Tuesday. She called in a Urologist who discovered I had a severed R Ureter. I was brought to the O.R. opened up he discovered puss pockets in my abdomen. I could not be repaired at this time so he had a tube placed in my R Kidney to drain the urine.

I was getting sicker and sicker. I kept asking why am I still leaking stuff and why is it green? Could I have an intestinal leak? My Dr and others brought in on my case treated me as if I were crazy. Finally 8 or 9 days later when I tried to eat a piece of food it came out clumpy green stuff. I insisted on being tested, looked like feces to me. Only then did they test me and I was right - there was 2 holes in my small intestine.

I was in the fight for my life. What was supposed to be a 1 day surgery had become 30 days hospitalized, tubes, and bags for 5 months and several more repair surgeries were required.. I still have chronic pain from a large piece of mesh that had to be put into my abdomen from developing a surgical hernia, and I have a lot of fear of ending up back in the hospital. I've already been back for an obstruction in my bowel because of scar tissue from all my repair surgeries which can happen again. This experience has given me a determination to work for patients' voices to be heard!!

On their web site Eastern Connecticut Health Network says that it will provide health care services that exceed the expectations of our patients, physicians and community by"

- Collaborating with other providers, competing effectively, aligning resources with priorities and providing professional education to deliver clinical quality in a safe environment
- Developing motivated, committed, competent and compassionate employees
- Practicing our core values of teamwork, respect and communication in a caring environment.

To say they fell short is an understatement. I want to see each hospital pay into an independent agency. That agency would hire independent patient advocates that would work in each hospital – working for the patient and not the hospital. When someone is hospitalized, that person or his family should be given the name and the phone number of that advocate. **I needed someone who would listen and no one did.**